RBrooks

WMUA
10/21/69

FROM: C.F. Keenan, Chairman - Ad Hoc Committee to Study WMUA Campus Coverage, Request for Power Increase and Liscense.

TO: R.J. McCartney, Chairman - University Broadcasting Council

RE: Report of Ad Hoc Committee

(1) Objective: Ad Hoc Committee was established on July 7, 1969 by UBC Chairman R.J. McCartney in order to study:

(A) The adequacy, in terms of campus coverage, of relocating the present transmitting facilities of WMUA from their present location to Orchard Hill:

(B) The necessity at this time to spend money and effort necessary to increase WMUA's radiated power:

(C) Certain general questions relating to the most effective use of publicly-owned, Trustee licensed frequency spaces by the University of Massachusetts:

(D) The question of whether or not the license for WMUA should be transferred from the Board of Trustees to a private corporation under student control.

(EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED - MEMO FROM R.J. MCCARTNEY 7/7/69)

(2) Membership: The membership of the Ad Hoc Committee was:

Mr. C.F.Keenan, Univ. Relations, Chairman
Mr. R.Stadlen, WMUA
Mr. J.Ballard, WMUA
Mr. R.Brooks, Dean of Students Office
Mr. V.Brann, Department of Speech
Mr. D.Melley, Univ. Relations
Mr. C.Eschbach, Hotel and Restaurant Admin.
Miss C.Olken, Student Senate (Selected by Committee)

(SEE EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED)

DEAN OF STUDENTS
OCT 30 1969

(3) Background:

April 25, 1969 - R.Stadlen, General Manager of WMUA, requests endorsement of Board of Trustees for power increase in letter to R.Brooks, Dean of Students Office. (EXHIBIT "B" ATTACHED)

April 28, 1969 R.Brooks forwards WMUA request to R.J.McCartney, Secretary of the University for Board of Trustee consideration. (EXHIBIT "C" ATTACHED)

May 13, 1969 Question of WMUA power increase introduced at meeting of University Broadcasting Council. WMUA representatives present their case. After discussion, motion is made and passed instructing UBC Chariman to obtain more information on the technical aspects of the WMUA request.

(EXHIBIT "D" ATTACHED - MINUTES OF UBC MEETING 5/13/69)

May 22, 1969 A second UBC meeting is devoted to WMUA request. More technical information is presented by WMUA representatives. Because of implications inherent in the request, UBC decided to have sub-committee draft resolution on the matter. Resolution is drafted and approved by UBC membership. Resolution is then forwarded to President Lederle. UBC recommends relocation of transmitting facilities at earliest possible date and that no power increase be requested until results of transmitter relocation are evaluated.

(EXHIBIT "E" ATTACHED - MINUTES OF UBC MEETING 5/22/69 AND UBC RESOLUTION OF 5/22/69)

June 5, 1969 Report of University Broadcasting Council and letter from faculty advisors to WMUA recommending power increase forwarded to Student Activities Committee, Board of Trustees.

(EXHIBIT "F" ATTACHED - LETTER FROM SEC.MCCARTNEY WITH ATTACHMENTS)

June 10, 1969 Trustee Committee on Student Activities meets to discuss WMUA power increase request. After discussion Trustee Committee votes to adopt UBC resolution and that an Ad Hoc study group be established to investigate the power increase question and also the feasibility of a different organizational structure for WMUA which would provide for the station to hold its own license.

(EXHIBIT "G ATTACHED - MINUTES OF TRUSTEE COMMITTEE ON STUDENT ACTIVITIES OF 6/10/69)

June 30, 1969 Trustee Committee on Student Activities reports to full Board of Trustees on WMUA request. Board votes to accept recommendation of Student Activities Committee.

(EXHIBIT "H" ATTACHED - EXCERPTS FROM MINUTES OF UMASS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING OF 6/30/69)

July 7, 1969 Ad Hoc Committee established by R.J. McCartney as indicated in (1) above.

(EXHIBIT "A" ATTACHED)

(4) Conclusions Reached by Ad Hoc Committee:

(A) The adequacy, in terms of campus coverage, of relocating the present transmitting facilities of WMUA from their present location to Orchard Hill.

Conclusion 1: In terms of campus coverage alone, the relocating of present transmitting facilities to Orchard Hill would help to solve the problem of reception now experienced in some pockets of the campus.

(EXHIBIT "I" ATTACHED - LETTER FROM KEAR & KENNEDY OF 5/20/69)

Conclusion 2: The coverage of the campus alone is not the real issue. WMUA is desirous of fulfilling its responsibilities as a public educational radio facility by broadcasting programming to a wider college-age audience including commuters to the University as well as students at other educational institutions in the proximity of Amherst. Relocation of transmitting facilities will not enable WMUA to attain this broader objective.

(SEE EXHIBIT "I" ATTACHED)

(B) The necessity at this time to spend money and effort necessary to increase WMUA's radiated power.

Conclusion 1: If the broader programming concept of WMUA is accepted as a legitimate instance of growth and progress in terms of its evolution as a student-financed and student-operated entity, it is not only necessary but wise to spend the time, money, and effort required to increase the station's radiated power at this time. Rapidly increasing costs argue for early implementation of technical equipment investments.

(C) Certain general questions relating to the most effective use of publicly-owned, Trustee licensed frequency spaces by the University of Massachusetts.

Conclusion 1: The answers to such questions involve the existence of a significant audience for the type of programming offered as well as an analysis of the programming offered in terms of its compatablility with the educational nature and objective of the University.

Conclusion 2: An increase in power for WMUA would result in an expanded coverage area illustrated by the map marked EXHIBIT "J" and attached.

Conclusion 3: A substantial potential audience of college-age young adults exists in this proposed coverage area as indicated in a population report marked EXHIBIT "K" and attached.

Conclusion 4: With regard to overall programming, the current offering of WMUA, in terms of the audience served, does not appear to be incompatible with the objectives, nature and image of the University. A representative sampling of WMUA programming over a three year period is attached as follows:

(EXHIBIT "L" - 1967-68 PROGRAMMING SAMPLE)
(EXHIBIT "M" - 1968-69 PROGRAMMING SAMPLE)
(EXHIBIT "N" - 1969-70 PROGRAMMING SAMPLE)

(D) The question of whether or not the license for WMUA should be transferred from the Board of Trustees to a private corporation under student control.

Conclusion 1: A survey of 24 college radio stations in New England reveals that all but 3 of such stations are licensed to the Trustees of the educational instutution with which the station is affiliated. Survey is attached and marked EXHIBIT "O".

Conclusion 2: College radio stations operated by private corporations are commercial licensees. They seem to experience their greatest difficulty in the area of finance. However, WYBC, licensed to the Yale Broadcasting Company, Inc., presents a picture of financial solvency and progressive growth. An informal report on WYBC is attached and marked EXHIBIT "P".

Conclusion 3: Since the financial aspect appears to be the primary roadblock to the successful operation of most other New England private college broadcasting corporations, we have studied the legality of Student Senate financing of such a private corporation at the University of Massachusetts. We are informed, by that there is no legal obstacle to prevent the University of Massachusetts Student Senate from financing a private corporation which would operate WMUA under a transfer of license situation. WMUA would then hold a commercial license.

Conclusion 4: While the transference of the WMUA license from the Board of Trustees to a private corporation would release the Trustees from all responsibility vis-a-vis the Federal Communications Commission, it should be clearly recognized that the University of Massachusetts will still be considered the responsible agency, in terms of public opinion, should any irresponsible programming occur and thereby involve WMUA in difficulties with the FCC.

Conclusion 5: Creating a situation in which WMUA would have to form a corporation and apply for a commercial license, at this time, would be disastrous for the student station. Although WMUA management appears to be making progress in terms of responsible programming, a situation which would force it to organize and implement a sales staff in order to compete in an already crowded radio market would probably presage the demise of the WMUA operation.

Conclusion 6: An educational license is a valuable property of the Board of Trustees of the University of Massachusetts and should not be relinquished needlessly.

(1) Recommendations of Ad Hoc Committee:

(A) That the two frequencies licensed to the Board of Trustees of the University of Massachusetts should be retained and that one of the frequencies should be available to students of the University for the operation of WMUA, as a non-commercial radio station.

(B) That in keeping with the non-commercial nature of the license, as well as the educational and community service objectives of the University, WMUA should continue to seek to serve that audience for which its programming is designed.

(C) That an increase in power is the most judicious method, at this point in the development of WMUA, to insure that the station can adequately serve not only the residents and commuting students between the ages of 18 and 24, who reside in the proposed coverage area to be covered if the WMUA power increase is granted.

(D) That as a condition of approving the WMUA request for higher power, a professional tutor be appointed to work with the WMUA staff and that a committee of three faculty and/or administrative members be appointed immediately to give advice and counsel in matters of programming and to aid in the selection of a professional tutor at the earliest possible date.

SUMMARY

With 17,791 students on the University's Amherst campus, (of whom about 7000 live off-campus in surrounding towns), the role of WMUA in communicating with its public is changing.

This non-commercial radio station, licensed to the Board of Trustees but operated by students with student funds, has expanded its schedule, revised its program format, and is offering interested students an opportunity to gain valuable experience in newscasting, announcing, programming, documentary production and engineering.

Unlike the Daily Collegian, which has a professional newspaperman available to its staff as a tutor, WMUA has not had the advantage of professional programming and broadcast management advice. While technical personnel from the faculty and staff have been available to the WMUA student managers, there has been no provision for steady, organized, professional assistance in the areas of programming or on-the-air technique.

This lack of professional broadcast management help, we believe, is nowhere more evident than in the confused circumstances which developed from the WMUA request for a power increase. The initial request became so diffuse in presentation that a crisis in confidence developed within the University Broadcasting Council. As a result, the recommendation of the Council to the Student Activities Committee of the Board of Trustees was negative.

In order that we might bring this entire matter to a point of decision, we have reviewed all of the factual evidence developed to date. We have also taken into consideration such non-factual elements as student responsibility, possible public relations implications to the Board of Trustees and other factors which can only be defined as speculation at this time.

Finally, inasmuch as our recommendations include the condition that a tutorial arrangement similar to that service now available to the Collegian be instituted, we have checked with the Dean of Students and he has agreed to provide the necessary funds to start a tutorial service for WMUA if the Board of Trustees and the University Broadcasting Council approve the conclusions of this committee.

Our recommendations may be summarized as follows:

(1) The two FCC non-commercial radio licenses should remain with the Board of Trustees of the University. One of these licenses should continue to be available to the students for a student financed and operated radio station.

SUMMARY (Cont.)

(2) WMUA should continue to seek out ways in which it can meet its objectives as a non-commercial, public radio station with that audience it particularly seeks to serve.

(3) An increase in power to 1000 watts is a reasonable request by WMUA and should be granted in order that WMUA may better attain its broadcasting and audience objectives.

(4) As a condition of this request being granted, WMUA will secure the services of a professional tutor in the area of broadcast programming and management. To assist WMUA in its search for such a professional, we recommend that an ad hoc committee of three faculty and/or staff members be appointed to advise WMUA in the interim period until a suitable tutor can be located and hired.

For the Ad Hoc Committee of the WMUA request,

Charles F. Keenan
Chairman